

# Chapter 60

Chapter 60 of *All the Colors of the Dark* begins with Patch making a troubling discovery—envelopes filled with ominous threats of debt collection, legal action, and eviction, hidden in the ice compartment of the freezer. These letters serve as a stark reminder of the financial pressures his family faces, and Patch, burdened by these realities, calls an agency to inform them that his mother will resume work. Preparing for another long night, Patch changes into sweatpants, an old T-shirt, and a ball cap, and heads toward Main Street with his mother's keys in hand, mentally preparing himself for the monotonous task ahead. In the past, he had accompanied his mother on these late-night cleaning jobs to avoid being alone with his thoughts, finding solace in the simplicity of the work. As he heads toward his first job of the night, Patch reflects on the routine and the solitude that these cleaning jobs provide, offering him a brief escape from his complicated home life.

Patch's first stop is the law office of Jasper and Coates, where he polishes the mahogany surfaces and overhears snippets of local legal issues, including a lawsuit filed by Mitch Evans against the Missouri Ladder Company. These small-town dramas serve as a stark contrast to the heavy burdens Patch carries at home, and he begins to reflect on the triviality of other people's problems compared to his own struggles. Cleaning the office, Patch's thoughts turn inward as he considers how other people's lives seem to run smoothly, while his own seems to be filled with constant tension and worry. He continues with the cleaning jobs, moving on to J. Asher Accountancy, where he deals with a blocked sink and takes a brief respite to eat a biscuit. The night stretches on as he cleans various offices, including a craft store and a typewriter shop, growing increasingly weary as the hours pass. Each job feels like a reminder of his own emotional exhaustion, and by the morning, he is physically drained.

Finally, Patch arrives at Monta Clare Fine Art, an immaculate gallery showcasing significant works of art. As he cleans the gallery, he is struck by the beauty and significance of the paintings, particularly a portrait of a Gettysburg battlefield. It is here that Patch encounters Sammy, a disheveled figure who recognizes Patch as the boy who saved Misty Meyer. Their brief conversation touches on the fleeting nature of public memory—how people quickly forget good deeds, but mistakes often linger longer. Sammy warns Patch against using harsh chemicals near the artworks and urges him to appreciate the sacrifices captured in the art, particularly a haunting portrait of a girl painted by Addison LaFarge. As Sammy shares his thoughts, Patch is reminded of the deeper connections people form through art, and the profound impact

these works can have on the soul. It is in this quiet moment that Patch finds himself thinking about the people who have shaped his life, including Grace.

As he continues his work, Patch reflects on a recent conversation he had with Grace, where they bonded over stories of pirates, a memory that now feels distant and fragile. Later, he steals some pencils and sketch paper from the gallery, hoping to capture the essence of Grace through his drawings. However, as he tries to sketch her, he finds her image elusive and complex, a reflection of his own feelings of longing and pain. Each failed attempt to draw her leaves him feeling more isolated, as if he can never truly capture the essence of who she was to him. The weight of loss and the depth of his feelings for Grace become more apparent with every stroke of the pencil, and he is left with an overwhelming sense of missing her. Exhausted but unable to sleep, Patch lies awake, reflecting on his day, the work, and the memories that seem to slip through his fingers like sand. As the night drags on, Patch's thoughts are consumed by Grace, and the longing for something that feels just out of reach weighs heavily on him, underscoring his isolation and emotional turmoil.